

SITUATION REPORT NO. 19
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: APRIL 12, 1997 TIME: 12:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: A N.D. Highway Patrol trooper suffered hypothermia after he attempted to rescue a motorist whose vehicle landed in an ice-crustured, water-filled ditch along I-94 near Mapleton. The motorist died of a massive heart attack. Flooding conditions in the area did not contribute to his death. To date, eight people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.

Several people in a Wahpeton shelter and the staff at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) are becoming ill, including the county emergency manager. According to an initial report on April 12, the cause is unknown. The county health nurse and sanitarian and a N.D. Department of Health representative are working to find the cause.

3. DAMAGES: The Red River of the North at Fargo reached a new flood of record April 11 when it rose to 37.61 feet, nearly two inches above its previous record. The river and its tributaries still may face additional rises. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is increasing its releases from Lake Traverse, located downstream in Minnesota. These releases are breaking out into the Wild Rice River. The National Weather Service reports an ice obstruction downstream of Hickson continues to restrict the flow of the Red River south of Fargo. In the southern part of the city, overland flooding from the Wild Rice and Sheyenne Rivers has created ponding. Existing flooding problems could be compounded when warmer temperatures forecast for the weekend and early next week cause snow and ice to melt, adding more runoff to the system.

Downstream from Fargo, the city of Wahpeton braces for its second crest of the Red River. The river is expected to rise to 17.5 to 18.5 feet this weekend, nearly one foot below flood-of-record level set last weekend. An urgent request was issued late April 11 for sandbaggers to raise the level of the dike on the city's south side. In rural areas south of Wahpeton, homeowners have been working to sandbag buildings for three days. As area river levels remain high, officials and residents cope with damages that occurred by area rivers and drainage ditches too small to handle the large volume of spring runoff. Township roads are impassible, and up to 40 bridges are currently under water.

The Weather Service reports the status of North Dakota rivers and tributaries above flood stage are as follows:

Station	Flood 4/12/97 Stage	24-hr Stage Difference	Flood of Record
<u><i>Red River</i></u>			
Wahpeton	10 ft.	16.09 ft.	+0.15 ft. 19.2 ft.
Fargo	17 ft.	37.61 ft.	+0.14 ft. 37.6 ft.
Halstad, MN	24 ft.	37.25 ft.	+1.45 ft. 39 ft.
Hickson	30 ft.	36.17 ft.	-0.28 ft. No record
East Grand Forks	28 ft.	42.29 ft.	+0.38 ft. 48.8 ft.
<u><i>Wild Rice</i></u>			
Abercrombie	10 ft.	20.5 ft.	-0.28 ft. 24.6 ft.
<u><i>Maple River</i></u>			
Enderlin	6 ft.	9.72 ft.	+1.36 ft. 15.4 ft.
<u><i>Sheyenne River</i></u>			
Cooperstown 12 ft.	17.34 ft.	-0.31 ft.	18.69 ft.
Lisbon	11 ft.	11.74 ft.	(Not available) 19 ft.
Kindred	16 ft.	21.69 ft.	+0.07 ft. 21.7 ft.
<u><i>Sheyenne Diversion</i></u>			
Horace	23 ft.	23.66 ft.	-0.10 ft. No record
West Fargo	16.5 ft.	22.97 ft.	-0.09 ft. 21.5 ft.
Harwood	884 ft.	891.88 ft.	-0.08 ft. 890.70 ft.
<u><i>Souris River</i></u>			
Foxholm	10 ft.	10.69 ft.	-0.58 ft. 17.71 ft.
Bantry 11 ft.	13.03 ft.	+0.20 ft.	14.6 ft.
Westhope	10 ft.	10.94 ft.	-0.06 ft. 19.2 ft.

The Weather Service revised its forecast for the Sheyenne Diversion at Harwood to crest at 892.5 feet instead of earlier predictions of 894 feet. The forecast was downgraded after the Weather Service lowered its predicted crest for the Red River by 1 ½ feet because of a malfunctioning gauge. Water is breaking out of the channel and traveling overland, which also contributes to the lower forecast.

The James River had risen to within one foot of 12-foot flood stage on April 11, the result of increased releases by the USACE from the Jamestown and Pipestem reservoirs. The Weather Service expects snowmelt to increase the river level to 11.6 feet by April 14.

Last weekend's blizzard persists in causing problems as many North Dakotans remain without power. Electrical outages are preventing operation of sump and water pumps, and as a result, basements are flooding. In Walsh County, Minto residents were in the midst of a fairly successful flood fight when an outage occurred. Without pumps, they lost their battle against rising waters. One resident reported up to eight inches of water on the main floor. In nearby Forest River, a family was evacuated when frozen water pipes between their first and second floors broke. Earlier this week, snow removal crews encountered equipment breakdowns because of hard snow. Towner County officials report one snow bank measured eight feet and extended for one-quarter mile. In Sheridan County, two barns collapsed under the weight of snow, and a farmer lost 20 cattle as a result. At one point,

McLean County had 1,400 miles of county and 200 miles of township roads that were impassible.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: Sandbagging efforts continue in the city of Grand Forks, where 120 students from Bagley, Minn., will assist with efforts in the Riverside Drive area. Officials estimate that 500,000 sandbags will be needed to protect homes and businesses, and another 250,000 for flood protection elsewhere in the county. As of April 11, 987,200 sandbags had been filled at the Grand Forks Public Works building.

In Foster County, local farmers pulled electric company trucks through large snow drifts, enabling crews to reach downed power lines.

Faced with the possibility of spoiled food, a Traill County restaurateur donated \$30,000 worth of food to individuals housed at shelters. In Cass County, private business donated a truck load of bottled water to the Salvation Army and baby formula to Cass County Social Services.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: During his visit to Fargo on April 11, Vice President Al Gore was accompanied by the Maj. Gen., Keith D. Bjerke, State Coordinating Officer, Lesli Rucker, Federal Coordinating Officer, Fargo Mayor Bruce Furness, Tim Bertschi of the USACE and Glenn Ellingsberg, Cass County Emergency Manager.

N.D. National Guard members continue delivering generators, providing traffic control and evacuation of families, and operating sandbagging equipment as part of their flood-fight efforts, dubbed "Operation Good Neighbor." The National Guard has 22 missions in progress and 67 have been completed. These missions were supported on April 11 by 182 Army Guard and 57 Air Guard members.

North Dakota Civil Air Patrol pilots flew two surveillance missions for officials assessing flood and storm damages. One air crew flew Weather Service over the Bois de Sioux and Red Rivers to view ice congestion in the channel. A second flight took place in the Dickinson area so members of the Soil Conservation District could determine snow and water levels and extent of livestock loss.

Counties recently issuing disaster or emergency declarations include: Adams, Cavalier, Dickey, Foster, LaMoure, Logan, McKenzie, McLean, Oliver, Pembina, Renville, Richland, Rolette, Sargent, Sheridan, Steele and Walsh. Cities issuing emergency and disaster declarations include Beach, Edgeley, LaMoure, Lincoln, Marion, Rolla and Rolette. Since late February, 23 counties, 37 cities and one township have issued emergency declarations. Officials for 30 counties and 10 cities have signed disaster declarations. Many counties issued emergency declarations and later upgraded them to disaster declarations.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: North Dakota residents calling the National Teleregistration Center (NTC) to make an application for individual assistance should be registered when they contact the center at (800) 462-9029. When an application has been completed by the NTC, the caller will be given a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) control number. In addition to taking an application, the NTC operator may refer the caller to other agencies, such as the American Red Cross for emergency assistance with shelter, clothing or food. Applicants may also be referred to local emergency management agencies for immediate assistance with an emergency situation.

The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbmk.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director